

**FINAL REPORT
OF THE
INTERIM COMMITTEE
ON
EDUCATION MATTERS**



**Indiana Legislative Services Agency
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November 2007

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Interim Committee on Education Matters

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November 1, 2007

A copy of this report is available on the Internet. Reports, minutes, and notices are organized by committee. This report and other documents for this Committee can be accessed from the General Assembly Homepage at <http://www.in.gov/legislative/>.

FINAL REPORT

Interim Committee on Education Matters

I. LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL DIRECTIVE

The Legislative Council directed the Committee to study the following topics:

1. Issues pertaining to juvenile education within the Department of Correction.
2. The future of higher education in Indiana, including discussion and dialogue on the report and recommendations of the national Commission on the Future of Higher Education.
3. Teacher and school psychologists recruitment and retention and the relevancy and value of creating incentive funds for teachers and school psychologists who have attained national board certification.

II. INTRODUCTION AND REASONS FOR STUDY

The topics assigned to the Committee were derived from subjects contained in various House and Senate resolutions introduced during the 2007 Session of the General Assembly.

III. SUMMARY OF WORK PROGRAM

The Committee met four times:

August 2. The Committee met to hear and discuss information from the Higher Education Commission about the future of higher education in Indiana.

August 15. The Committee met to hear and discuss information on the recruitment and retention and the relevancy and value of creating incentive funds for teachers who have attained national board certification. The Superintendent of Public Instruction appeared to discuss teacher recruitment and retention.

September 13. The Committee met to receive additional information requested from the August 15 meeting and hear and discuss the teacher's preparation programs in higher education. Representatives of Indiana University and Ball State University appeared to discuss the schools of education at their universities. The Committee heard information on the status of juvenile education within the Department of Correction. Representatives of the department discussed the department's goals and an overview of the program

October 10. The Committee met to consider, discuss, and approve this Final Report.

The committee did not have enough time to specifically study the issue of school psychologist recruitment and retention.

IV. SUMMARY OF TESTIMONY

The Committee heard testimony from several individuals. The following is a summary of the testimony regarding each of the issues considered by the Committee.

Future of Higher Education

The Commissioner of Higher Education presented a slide presentation entitled “Critical Issues in Higher Education.” The commissioner discussed college participation, preparation, transfer and articulation from a junior college to a 4-year college, college completion rates, the 21st Century Scholars program, college affordability, and research funding.

The commissioner also discussed the recommendations of the Spelling Report: Charting the Future of U.S. Higher Education. The recommendations included the following:

- Expand access and success in higher education by improving student preparation and persistence, addressing nonacademic barriers, and providing significant increases in aid to low-income students.
- Restructure the entire student financial aid system and add new incentives to improve the measurement and management of post-secondary education.
- Create a robust culture of accountability and transparency in higher education.
- Embrace a culture of continuous innovation and quality improvement by developing new pedagogies, curricula, and technologies to improve learning.
- Develop a national strategy for lifelong learning that helps people understand the importance of preparing and participating in higher education throughout their lives.
- Increase federal investment in areas critical to our nation’s global competitiveness and a renewed commitment to attract the best and brightest into higher education.

In response to questions on the amount of student borrowing for college, the commissioner said that the number of students and the amount borrowed to finance higher education has increased dramatically.

In response to questions about college performance measures, the commissioner said that more work needs to be done in that area.

The Director for the State Student Assistance Commission said that the Spelling report was a warning for higher education like the Nation at Risk report was for K-12 education. The director said that in the future more than 90% of jobs will require some college education and that the current system of financial aid is not meeting the needs of most students. The state has been successful in obtaining federal funds to enroll and provide assistance to 21st Century Scholars. The director suggested that to aid students in financing college tuition, the state assistance grants should be a fixed dollar amount and indexed for inflation in the future. The director said the current “10-year rule” may impede students from getting a degree. Under the “10-year rule” a student is unable to receive granted financial aid after ten years of when the student initially receives financial aid.

The Indiana State Teachers Association offered the following suggestions:

- The state needs better preparation of high school students.
- There should be an entry standard for college, maybe some test given in the 11th grade.
- The state should strengthen the current dual-credit system of courses.
- The state should look at both k-12 and higher education instruction.

The committee heard from the School Counselors Association on the importance guidance curriculum, training programs for counselors, and career peering and assessment for students.

The committee heard from Indiana University on the importance of degree completion and the difficulty of developing accurate accountability measures for colleges and universities.

Teacher Recruitment and Retention

The Superintendent of Public Instruction presented a slide presentation entitled “Teacher Recruitment and Retention.” The superintendent said that teacher quality is perhaps the single-most school-related factor in student achievement. The average age of a teacher is about 44.2 years, a large percentage of the teaching force could retire in the next five years, the turnover rate for schools is about 10% per year, and about 50% of new teachers leave the profession within the first five years of teaching. The cost of teacher attrition has been estimated to be about \$73.3 M annually by the Alliance for Excellent Education. What research tells is that top college graduates are less likely to go into teaching, attrition is most severe in the first five years of teaching, and compensation plays a key role in teacher retention. Possible strategies to recruit and retain teachers include monetary incentives, comprehensive programs, extended contracts, teacher preparation, mentoring, and new data systems.

The superintendent discussed the number of limited licenses or emergency permits the Department of Education issues.

The superintendent discussed the National Board Certification Program. Indiana has 179 people that have earned certification, with 131 of the people currently teaching. Nineteen schools provide some incentives for teachers that earn National Board Certification.

The Indiana Association of School Superintendents said schools have a similar problem retaining new superintendents. There are 23 to 25 new superintendents per year. The Association recommended that the state fund mentoring and coaching programs to help retain teachers.

The Indiana Federation of Teachers provided the committee with a copy of “Meeting the Challenge: Recruiting and Retaining Teachers in Hard-to-Staff Schools.” School factors that attract teachers or cause teachers to leave a school include:

- Student discipline problems and personal safety concerns.
- Lack of on-site support and intervention for students experiencing learning difficulties.

- Poor administrative leadership and support.
- Unhealthy physical plant.
- Lack of faculty influence on decisions that affect student learning.
- Inadequate ongoing, job-embedded professional development and other supports.
- Lack of students' academic success.
- Inadequate time for planning, preparation, instruction.
- Excessive classroom intrusions.

The Indiana State Teachers Association discussed the differences of attracting and retaining urban, suburban, and rural teachers. The state may need to allow the use of broader teacher licenses in rural areas. It was discussed that there are enough legal requirements to support quality teaching but there needs to be more local innovation and action to implement the requirements.

A former teacher told the committee of her experiences as a teacher.

Senator Ford discussed the use of new technology in the classroom.

Deans of the Indiana University School of Education in Bloomington and Ball State University discussed teacher preparation at their universities. Teacher preparation curricula at their universities are aligned with state and national standards to prepare highly qualified teachers. The deans discussed how the requirement for admission into the school of education is higher than admission to some other schools at the universities. The universities work closely with local schools to provide professional development to current teachers and teaching experience for undergraduate students.

The committee discussed the Praxis I testing requirements, areas of weaknesses in teacher preparation, and the value of obtaining a master's degree.

Juvenile Education within Department of Corrections

The Department of Education presented an overview of the juvenile education provided by state correction institutions. The department stated that their six goals were the following.

1. Provide credit recovery and alternative schools.
2. Improve primary literacy. Currently, average literacy is below 6th grade when entering facilities.
3. Provide instruction for taking the GED to obtain a diploma.
4. Provide career and vocational skills.
5. Provide transition back to public schools.
6. Comply with special education requirements.

The department discussed the challenges of providing services to a highly mobile population that are significantly behind their peers in local schools.

V. COMMITTEE FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee made the following findings of fact.

Future of Higher Education

The Committee finds that continued study of Indiana's higher education system is required. While participation in higher education has improved with about 41% of high school freshmen attending college, only about 24% receive a degree within six years.

The Committee finds that affordability of college is and will continue to be a problem for many students. The level of student debt upon the completion of college has significantly increased.

The Committee finds that student preparation for college continues to be a problem. About 26% of students entering college had to take at least one remedial course in the 2005-06 school year. _____

_____ The Committee finds the percentage of high school graduate males, especially African American males, entering higher education has decreased.

Teacher Recruitment and Retention

The Committee finds that teacher recruitment and retention continues to be a problem for schools. Approximately 50% of new teachers leave the profession within the first five years of teaching, top college graduates are less likely to go into teaching, and compensation plays a key role in teacher retention.

The Committee finds that professional development, mentoring, and cultural competence is very important in retaining teachers.

The Committee finds that potential teachers, especially culturally diverse teachers, should be provided with more information on available state and federal financial aid available to people who enter the teaching profession.

Juvenile Education within Department of Correction

The Committee finds that the Department of Correction has a challenge providing juvenile education to inmates that enter and leave the system during the school year and are several grade levels behind their peers in local schools.

The Committee made the following recommendations.

Future of Higher Education

The General Assembly should adopt a resolution encouraging Indiana's public and private institution presidents to collaboratively focus on economic development, workforce development, and quality of life for Indiana and its citizens.

PD 3211 - Time Limit for Use of Higher Education Grants.

The General Assembly should eliminate the “Ten-year Rule” for State Student Assistance financial aid.

Teacher Recruitment and Retention

The Department of Education should create an inventory of state and federal financial aid that is available to potential teachers attending college.

Juvenile Education within Department of Correction

The General Assembly should provide appropriate remediation and special education funding to the Department of Correction for juveniles.

WITNESS LIST

Charlene Alexander, Ph.D., Ball State University
Kathy Smith Andrew
Tim Brown, Department of Correction
Dan Clark, Deputy Executive Director of the Indiana State Teachers Association
Dr. John Ellis, Executive Director of Indiana Association of School Superintendents
J.T. Forbes, Indiana University
Senator David Ford
Dr, Gerardo Gonzalez, Indiana University
Stan Jones, Commissioner of the Higher Education Commission
Susan Lockwood, Department of Correction
John Nally, Department of Correction
Dennis Obergfell, Director of the State Student Assistance Commission
Dr. Suellen Reed, Superintendent of Public Instruction
Sally Sloan, Executive Director of the Indiana Federation of Teachers
Dr. Roy Weaver, Ball State University
Jeff Zaring, Indiana Department of Education